Vol. 4. Numb. 19.

THE REHEARSAL.

1. The *Meeting Houſe* at *Leith* ſhut up by *Military* Force, notwithſtanding the *Suſpenſion* by the *Lords of the Seſſion*. The Benefit of the *Law* is *Deny'd* to the *Clergy* by the *Managers* there.
2. Some of the *Clergy* now in *Priſon*, and ſince the 18th. of *Oct.* laſt, for not *Renouncing* their *Function*.
3. Some *Queſtions* in *Law* Neceſſary to be Reſov'd.
4. The *Perſecution* by the *Managers* in *Scotland*, Greater than in *Turky*.
5. The *Presbyterians* will not give *Private Baptiſm* in Caſe of *Death*.
6. An *Infant* that *Dy'd* in the *Church* without *Baptiſm*, becauſe it cou'd not ſtay out the *Sermon*,
7. Their new Method of *Convincing* Men of the ſmall *Importance* of *Baptiſm* by letting them have none.
8. What has been, May be.

SATURDAY, *December* 11. 1708.

Country-man. I Told you laſt time, *Maſter*, I had ſome *Queſtions* to ask you.

Rehearſal. Before you begin, I have ſomething more to tell you, to fill up the *Caſe* of the *Clergy* in *Scotland*, Then you may Ask what *Queſtions* you will upon the Whole.

(1.) When the *Epiſcopal Meeting-Houſe* at *Leith* was ſhut up and *Pad-Lock'd* by the *Decreet* (that is, the *Decree*) of the *Sheriff*, (purſuant to the *Sentence* of the Lord *Provoſt* and *Bailies* of *Edinburgh*, told you in my laſt) the *People* there made their Application to the *Lords of the Seſſion* (which is the Higheſt *Civil Judicatory* now there) againſt this, as being *Illegal* and not Warranted by any *Law*; and Obtain'd from their *Lordſhips* a *Suſpenſion* of this *Decreet* of the *Sheriff's* till the *Cauſe* ſhou'd be heard in that *Court*. By which the *People* thought themſelves at Liberty to make uſe of the *Meeting-Houſe* in the Mean time. But to Avoid as much as Poſſible all *Offence* or *Objection* againſt them, they had a *Clergy-Man* to Officiate to them (the next *Sunday*, the 17 of *Oct.* laſt) who was ſufficiently *Qualify'd* according to *Law*; but he being a ſtranger, and the *Hunters* not knowing where to find him, they took a Summary Courſe to Exclude him the next *Sunday*, for the Chief *Proſecutor* there, wrote to the *Commandant* of the *Forces* lying at *Leith*, to Appoint a *Guard* to Secure the *Meeting-Houſe* there, and to Prevent the taking off a new *Pad-Lock* that was by his Order ſet on, and thus the *People* were prevented of any Publick *Worſhip* of *God*. And leſt they might have Redreſs by the Ordinary Courſe of the *Law*, he wrote to the *Under Clarck* of the *Bills*, for Suſpenſions Requiring him to Write upon no *Bills* in favour of *Meeting-Houſes*, and to Intimate to the *Lords of Seſſion*, that they ſhou'd paſs no *Bills* till he had a Sight of them.

Country-m. This was *Arbitrary*, and *Inſulting* the *Law*, with the *Judges*, perhaps beyond what the *Privy Council* there (ſo much Complain'd of) ever did. And that *Court* was as an *Arbitrary Judicatory Diſſolv'd* laſt *Seſſion* of *Parliament*.

(2.) *Reheatſ.* ther are *three Clergy-Men* now in the *Tollbooth* (that is, the *Common Priſon*) at *Edinburgh*, and have lain there ſince the 18 of *Oct.* laſt, becauſe they wou'd not give it under their Hands, or Promiſe, not to Exerciſe any Part of their *Function*, not for any ſet time, but, *In all time Coming*, as it is in the *Sentence* againſt them, which I gave you in the Laſt.

Country-man. I was told they had a *Habeas Corpus* Act there, as we have here.

Rehearſ. They have ſo. But the *Managers* (you ſee) *over Awe* the *Judges*, and ſay they have *Orders* from *Court*.

Country-m. This is according to what you Quoted out of the *Obſervator* laſt *Saturday*, N. 17. That the *Judges* ought not to mind the *Law*, but what will be Pleaſing to thoſe in *Power*.

(3.)

(3.) Now *Master*, the *Questions* I have to Ask are these,

1. Whether ther is a *Law* Requiring them to *Renounce* their *Function*, and Promise never to Exercise any *Part* of it, *in all time Coming*?

2. Whether ther is a *Law* to *Shut up* and *Pad-lock* the *Meeting-Houses*?

3. Whether a *Sentence* of *Inferior Magistrates*, being *Suspended* by the *Supreme Judicature* of the *Nation*, may be Executed till that *Suspension* is taken off?

4. And whether this ought to be done by *Military* Force?

5. Whether the *Manager* has *Authority* to Require the *Clerks* of the *Bills* not to Write upon any *Bill* (which is the Method there, and without which I suppose they are not to be Receiv'd) that are brought in favour of *Meeting-Houses*? If not, is not this an Obstruction of *Justice*, and Denying the *Subject* the Benefit of the *Law*?

Rehearf. The *Observator* in his Next will *Answer* all these, and make the *Case* as Clear as can be!

(4.) *Country-m.* If ther be not *Law* for all this, it is Downright *Persecution*. And ten times more *Severe* than is us'd against the *Christians* in *Turky*. For there they may have their Children *Baptiz'd* by their own *Priests*. But in *Scotland* both *Priests* and *People* are Prosecuted for it. Nay if a *Priest* there *Baptize* his own *Child*, it is Exercising some *Part* of his *Function*, and he may be sent to *Prison* for it!

(5.) *Rehearf.* But I'll tell you more, *Country-man*. If you were there, and were Willing to let your *Child* be *Baptiz'd* by the *Presbyterians*, you cou'd not have it done but upon a *Preaching-Day*, and brought to *Church*, tho' your *Child* were at the Point of *Death*. They let their own Children *Dye* without *Baptism*, rather than *Baptize* them at Home. So little they make of *Baptism!* Or so much of their Preaching and the outward *Church*!

Country-m. And yet they wou'd Prosecute me, if I sent for a *Clergy-Man* even in that Case of *Necessity*!

Rehearf. Yes. For why shou'd you be so *Scrupulous?* You wou'd be Call'd a *High-Flyer*, and a Man of no *Moderation*! And ther is no *Moderation* to be shew'd to *Such*!

(6.) *Country-m.* I know the Value they have for *Baptism* by an Instance I have heard which happen'd since the *Revolution*. A *Child* was brought to *Church* to be *Baptiz'd*. And their manner is to *Baptize* after *Sermon*. But the *Child* was so very Ill that the Parents press'd to have it *Baptiz'd* before *Sermon*, lest it shou'd *Dye* in the Mean time. No. *Mess John* wou'd not go out of his Road, and told them what great Matter was it if it shou'd *Dye*? And the *Child* did Actually *Dye* in the *Church*, (without Baptism) before the Long *Sermon* was Ended. This gave great Disturbance to the Parents, and made a Noise in the Neighbourhood. Upon which Occasion, to take off the *Scandal*, and set their People right in this Matter, several of the *Presbyterian Preachers* through the *Country* took the Subject of *Baptism* to task, for some *Months*, and Instructed their Hearers in the No Necessity of *Baptism*, and the *Superstition* of laying such a Stress upon it, as to be Concern'd for the Want of it, however it shou'd happen.

(7.) *Rehearf.* But they have got a better way of *Convincing*. Now For first, they themselves will not *Baptize* your *Child*, but when they'r at Leasure. And if you make use of a *Clergy-man*, they will issue *Process* against you, and Clap him up in *Prison*, if they can Catch him.

(8.) *Country-m.* And this is *Liberty* of *Conscience!* This is their *Moderation*! And in the now United *Kingdom*, where *Episcopacy* is still *Established* in the Greatest part. But they'r Afraid of Nothing! They think *Issachar* must *Bear*! They have Try'd it before. And why not Again, with the same *Success*! What has been, may be.

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